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Subject: West TX news articles - supplement to the Daily News Digest
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Daily News Digest Supplement – West, Texas, articles

1 Obama issues emergency declaration in Texas fertilizer plant blast, Reuters, 4/21/13

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/20/usa-explosion-texas-obama-idUSL2N0D705D20130420>

Summary: President Barack Obama issued an emergency declaration for Texas on Friday to help the state cope with the fallout from a deadly fertilizer plant explosion.

2 Death toll reaches 14 in West, Texas, fertilizer plant blast, UPI, 4/19/13

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2013/04/19/Death-toll-reaches-14-in-West-Texas-fertilizer-plant-blast/UPI-80581366349460/

Summary: The death toll from the massive West, Texas, fertilizer plant explosion that demolished surrounding neighborhoods reached 14 Friday, authorities said.

3 Plant owner issues statement; manager defends safety record, Waco Tribune, 4/20/13

http://www.wacotrib.com/news/greater_waco/west/plant-owner-issues-statement-manager-defends-safety-record/article_e93f4e8a-58c1-5219-84e8-6e47176c1fc8.html

Summary: Donald Adair, owner of West Fertilizer Co., released a statement Friday pledging his cooperation with fire investigators looking into why the plant burst into flames and then exploded Wednesday night, leveling homes and buildings and killing at least 14 people.

4 West facility shows regulation of fertilizer industry a patchwork, Statesman, 4/18/13

<http://www.statesman.com/news/news/local/regulation-of-fertilizer-industry-a-patchwork/nXQNz/>

Summary: Over the past 10 years, West Fertilizer Co. has been fined or disciplined by at least three different state and federal regulatory agencies for safety or licensing violations — a record that officials called “average,” but which nevertheless highlights the patchwork nature of the industry’s oversight, with regulatory authority passed around by a half-dozen state and federal agencies.

5 Texas town grieves for dead first-responders, Statesman, 4/20/13

<http://www.statesman.com/ap/ap/top-news/official-toll-a-mystery-but-residents-know-lost/nXQ3B/>

Summary: Buck Uptmor didn't have to go to West Fertilizer Co. when the fire started. He

wasn't a firefighter like his brother and cousin, who raced toward the plant. But a ranch of horses next to the flames needed to be moved to safety.

6 Information from TCEQ on West Incident, TCEQ, 4/18/13

<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/news/releases/4-18west>

Summary: TCEQ first arrived on-site at 9:37 p.m., Wednesday evening. The TCEQ Mobile Command Post arrived at 4:00 a.m., Thursday morning and is located a ½ mile from the blast site in West. It was up and running at 5:00 a.m. We are working under the incident command and are the lead for coordinating state assets to conduct air monitoring, plume modeling, and assessing all environmental concerns. Environmental assessments are underway.

7 Before Texas plant exploded: What did regulators know? Reuters, 04/19/2013

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/19/us-usa-explosion-fertilizer-idUSBRE93I04W20130419>

Summary: Despite being located within a short walk of a nursing home, school and residential buildings, West Fertilizer Co in central Texas had no blast walls and had filed no contingency plan to the Environmental Protection Agency for a major explosion or fire at the site. It remains unclear what safety measures, if any, were required of the company or whether West Fertilizer failed to comply. But on Wednesday night, the company's fertilizer complex in West, Texas - population, 2,600 - exploded with such force that 60 to 80 homes were flattened, the school and nursing home took heavy damage and at least 14 people were killed, authorities said.

8 Fertilizer company fined by feds in '12, KXAN, 04/18/2013

<http://www.kxan.com/dpp/news/texas/tceq-investigated-west-plant-in-2006>

Summary: Federal regulators fined the company that operates the Texas fertilizer plant that exploded overnight \$10,000 last summer for safety violations, The Associated Press reported Thursday. But the government accepted \$5,250 after the company took what it described as corrective actions. The wire service also reported that the facility did not have the state-required sprinkler systems.

9 EPA Fined West Fertilizer Plant In 2006, KERA, 04/18/2013

<http://keranews.org/post/epa-fined-west-fertilizer-plant-2006>

Summary: David Gray, Director of External Affairs for the EPA, issued a statement to KERA that the agency conducted an inspection of the West Fertilizer Co.'s risk management plan on March 16, 2006, during which it found a number of deficiencies. It fined the plant \$2,300 on August 14, 2006 and ordered the facility to correct the problems identified during the inspection.